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### Jewish Ritual and Worship.

*The Rites and Worship of the Jews.* New York and Chicago: F. H. Revell. London: Religious Tract Society. Pp. 176, price \$1.00.

The author of this anonymous little book, said to be the daughter of the late Dr. Edersheim, has produced a useful compend of information which it has hitherto been difficult to obtain in so handy a shape. The plan followed embraces three parts (1) Holy Places and Persons, (2) Holy Worship, (3) Holy Seasons. Each of these is fully treated, the order, manner and significance of the various elements of the worship being clearly brought out. The traditional view of the Pentateuch lies at the basis of the work. It is up to the times as far as acquaintance with the literature goes, Prof. Robt. Smith's new volume of Lectures on the Religion of the Semites receiving attention in the appendix. Some wood-cuts that illustrate phases of the ritual service increase the usefulness of the book.

### Some Recent Imaginative Literature.

*Life and Times of Jesus as related by Thomas Didymus.* By James Freeman Clarke. Boston: Lee and Shepard. Paper, pp. 448. Price, 50 cts.

*The Light of the World; or the Great Consummation.* By Sir Edwin Arnold, K. C. I. E., C. S. I. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. Paper, pp. 286. Price 50 cts.

*The Epic of Saul.* By William Cleaver Wilkinson. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. Pp. 386. Price \$2.50.

*Aleph the Chaldean; or The Messiah as seen from Alexandria.* By E. F. Burr, D. D., LL. D. New York: W. B. Ketcham. Pp. 413. Price \$1.75.

*Marius the Epicurean; His Sensations and Ideas.* By Walter Pater. New York: Macmillan and Co. Pp. 350. Price \$1.75.

These volumes attest the presence in this age of the desire to treat imaginatively and poetically the simple and severe facts of the biblical life. This desire has always been seen in every vigorous epoch of the church's life from the beginning. Our time has witnessed a more than ordinary outburst of this kind of literary activity. We hail it as a good sign of the religious vitality of the time. The wide interest in such literature is an index of the extended sway of the knowledge of the truth. \* From such a point of view one does not desire exact details and a reproduction, in language, tone and form, of the days of old. As an antiquarian one might desire it. But is it not better to have these ancient truths and incidents re written into the style and form of our own day?—better, that is to say, if we are in hearty sympathy with the extension of Christian knowledge. A well-read biblical novel, even if it is crude and modern in conception and expression, is of service for the spread of the truth in quarters where the Gospels are neglected. We laugh now at the awkward simplicity of the Shepherd of Hermas but its influence in the early church was extraordinary.

These volumes are of varying merit. Dr. James Freeman Clarke's Thomas Didymus is not a new book but has been reissued in a cheap edition. It is an admirable example of writings of its class. Practically it is a pictorial commentary on the Gospels without pictures. The writer was a man of evangelical sympathies though a Unitarian. The latter you would scarcely know from the contents of the volume. The cheapness of this new edition ought to bring it within the reach of a wide circle of readers.